

Editorialities

Welcome back. Welcome back to the wonderful world of waiting around for the next bit of news. It seems both the Amiga One and PegasOS hardware are ready for their public, and Morph OS still has a head start over Amiga OS. That news hasn't really changed much over the last few months. With a bit more available money, I would gladly buy both systems, choosing which combination of hardware and software is best suited to what applications. Unfortunately, thanks to economic circumstances, money is tight, and I want to be sure what I'm getting, and at what price, before I could toss down the money.

It's no wonder the Amithlon/Amiga XL package seemed to do well. It's the cheapest high-powered Amiga system you can buy, costing at most the purchase of a suitably beefy PC to go with the software, something many computer enthusiasts already have lying about. I've spoken of the benefits to having the Amiga OS migrate to common PC hardware in such a fashion, the downside being that the Amiga-specific hardware business will be practically dead, not that it's particularly healthy now. (Editor's note: It's come to my attention that Thendic/Genesi has filed suit against Amiga, regarding their statements about illegal use of Amiga's intellectual property. Funny I hadn't heard about a lawsuit in the reverse, since Amiga promised to take action against anyone who used their I.P., instead of bitching about it until they get sued for slander or libel or whatever. Actually, it's "breach of contract," which I don't fully understand.)

Sorry to ramble, but I come to the other main focus of my droning. Just recently, a long-overdue update to the IBrowse Amiga web browser, version 2.3, has arrived, free to those who already have version 2. The new version isn't groundshaking, primarily improving Javascript support and basic stability, two areas IBrowse needed the most help. I've only been using it a short time, but it definitely seems improved, along with the AmiSSL 2.2 secure connection package in use over the SSL that works with Miami. There's going to be some fiddling required, but overall I'm quite pleased. It's no secret that IBrowse is my browser of choice, but there are two other main choices, both of which I own. Last I heard, IBrowse will be the included web browser for the Amiga OS4, in a PPC-native form. It should be interesting to see.

Prior to 4.0, Amiga's browser of choice was Aweb, quite capable, and probably the most rock-solid stable of the three browsers in use, though it seemed a bit clunky for my tastes at times. The author of Aweb has moved on to other pastures, and the software itself has become an open-source project, much like the popular YAM e-mail program. This has resulted in a port of Aweb to MorphOS, but I've heard little else about it so far. The final, and possibly strongest browser in the triad is Voyager. Voyager is probably the most

cutting-edge of the Amiga browsers, being first to handle such things as Shockwave Flash, PDF, Built-in SSL encryption, and being ported to MorphOS. Voyager seems to apparently be the official web browser for Morph as well. Taking on new things often resulted in clumsy implementation and instability, though recent versions have been much better behaved than past ones. They also seem to have a better track record for software updates than the other browsers.

While IBrowse is my personal fave, I couldn't really recommend one browser over the other two. They all handle the web near-equally well, that it comes down more to personal preferences for specific features or even look and feel. It would be like advocating the color red to someone who likes blue things. Actually my real recommendation is to get all three if possible. None are very expensive, and you're always likely to find something on the web that one browser handles better than the other two. I'd imagine people on most platforms would take this approach if Microsoft's Internet Explorer wasn't so fidgety about letting any other web browser share a computer with it. (Of course, that's probably Windows' fault more than anything else).

*...Eric Schwartz
AmiTech-Dayton Gazette
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Editor's Comments

Last month at the Amiga-By-The-Loop Chapter meeting, we had our first look at a new Amiga One computer, courtesy of Ned Kelly. (I assume the Amiga-North-Dallas Chapter got to see it as well, but since I wasn't there, I can't be sure.) I came away with distinctly mixed feelings.

The positive? It's nice to see something new happening in the Amiga world. This is the first shot at a new computer in a very long time.

The negative? It's not really an Amiga.

It's a great-looking medium-tower box with chrome trim on the face. But there's nothing about it that looks particularly Amiga-like. In truth, it's a standard box that could hold any number of operating systems and/or hardware components. There isn't an Amiga logo anywhere to be seen. And for an OS, we have Linux — and, oh yes, UAE has been added to run on top of Linux. This is the same UAE that can run on virtually any PC, so there's nothing special here. I am using UAE, as distributed with Amiga Forever, to prepare this newsletter. I don't need an Amiga One computer for that.

And, as long as I am complaining, let me also complain about the UAE distribution. It doesn't come with CyberGraphix or Picasso. One of the

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March Calendar

March 10 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — University Center, Pedernales Room
W. First St. & S. West St., Arlington

March 10 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 10:00 pm — TGI Fridays
Cooper Street just south of I-20, Arlington

March 20 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — Junkins Building, SMU
Dyer and Airline Extension Rd., Dallas

March 22 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

nicest things about Amiga Forever, in addition to giving me a really fast Amiga, is that I can run a 1024 x 768 (or greater) 32-bit screen. This makes my simulated Amiga a truly modern computer. Picasso is distributed as part of the Amiga Forever package, but it is not part of the Amiga One distribution — and I find it difficult to understand why. It's true that you can install Picasso on your own, but not including it with the system just makes it much more difficult to get things up and going in a reasonable fashion.

Bottom line? When AmigaOS 4.0 finally ships, Ned will probably have a nice Amiga system. Right now he has a Linux machine.

...Bill Raecke